

I am writing to express my support for Bill #6884: An Act Concerning the Recruitment, Retention and Enhancement of the Teaching Profession.

As a public school teacher for several years and building Administrator, I can attest to the lack of opportunity young children have to develop social skills, critical and problem solving skills within the classroom. The classroom environment is where young children spend their day with peers which makes it the ideal place to develop the skills needed to be a contributing member of a community, think creatively and be flexible. Through intentional play, aligned to academics, young children are provided a safe space to share ideas, take other's perspectives, set and achieve goals, design and create. As a society it is critical that educators are supported in allowing children to play with a purpose in the classroom, within the academic school day. Through professional development, teachers will be provided the support to make time within the school day and ensure academic success through playful learning. I know that the right path for children, families, and the community is to support play for young children, to ensure that all children have an equitable, robust experience. Play is an equity issue and must be seen with that lens. Developing a healthy brain is the job of educators, and play is a risk free pedagogical opportunity to ensure this happens for every child every day.